

Nearly half of Goa's mines illegal: PAC

ANOTHER BELLARY State has lost ₹3,000 crore since '05

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PANAJI: Less than a month after the first arrest in the country's biggest mining scam in Karnataka's Bellary, the lid is about to be blown off the illegal mining that has cost Goa — the state that exports 40% of India's iron ore — thousands of crores, Hindustan Times has learnt.

The man who heads the state legislature-appointed public accounts committee (PAC), which is investigating the matter, told Hindustan Times that nearly half the active iron ore mines in Goa are illegal and

have caused the state exchequer a loss of at least ₹3,000 crore since 2005.

The panel is scheduled to submit its report in the first week of October.

PAC chairman, Manohar Parrikar, told HT: "In Goa, there have been multiple methods of illegal mining. The first kind is the blatant illegality, in which no royalty has been paid to the state. In the past six years, 15 million tonnes of iron ore worth ₹3,000 crore has been extracted in excess and exported."

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» GOA CM FACES FLAK FOR ILLEGAL MINING, P11

MONEY-SPINNER

7 talukas of the 12 in Goa are mining regions, but iron ore is mined the most in Bicholim, Sattari, Sanguem and Quepem

8% to 15% of Goa's total area of 3,702 sq km is occupied by mining activity, but its contribution to the state's GDP is less than 5%

40% of the iron ore mined in India comes from Goa

15,000 trucks transport iron ore to jetties. 300 barges are used to take the ore to the ports for export

Goa's mining shame

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The sum is calculated on the basis of the 2005 value of iron ore, which was US\$50 (₹2,425) per tonne. Now it costs US\$180 (₹8,730) per tonne, leading activists to believe that the loss could actually be in the region of ₹10,000 crore.

Illegal mining in Goa, as in Karnataka, took off in 2005 when China started to buy even low-grade ore (below 52% iron content), leading to a huge revival of old Portuguese mining concessions into leases, all operated by private firms. Good ore has at least 60% iron content.

In 2005, Goa exported 25.53 million tonnes of iron ore. In 2011, exports have nearly doubled to 46.84 million tonnes.

"Every one, from lower officials to ministers in the government, is involved in this scam. Illegal mining in Goa is almost as massive in scale as that in Karnataka, given that Goa is a much smaller state," said Parrikar.

Karnataka is 52 times larger than Goa. The losses suffered by Karnataka were ₹16,000 crore. Criminal investigative agencies, he said, will have to examine money trails to book individuals.

Sources in government who chose to not be named because they are not authorised to speak to the media said other illegalities include mining without environment and forest clear-

ances, extracting of excess ore from dumps and diversion of forest land for mining.

Mining firms separate high-grade iron ore and reject the rest that is heaped in dumps both within and outside the mining area. Companies in Goa are sifting through these dumps to pick iron ore that didn't make the cut earlier. China is ready to buy ore that used to be dumped earlier.

In the past 12 months alone, 48 mines have sifted through their ore dumps and extracted 1.4 million tonnes more than they had permission for. To sift through dumps and mine that ore, companies need a separate environment clearance. Sources said many of these companies do not have that.

Anti-mining activists have challenged the companies' figures on the ore extracted from the dumps. They allege that the mining is from fresh pits, causing more environment damage. "Neither Department of Mines or the Indian Bureau of Mines carries out independent checks. So there is no way of knowing whether this excess mining is from earlier rejects or fresh mining," said Claude Alvares, director Goa Foundation, non-government organisation that has been fighting against the mining lobby. Goa Foundation had in 2010 filed a petition against 48 mining firms for excess extraction that had led to the companies being served show cause notices.

Natarajan to keep thick forests out of bounds for coal mining

SUDHEER PAL SINGH
& PIYALI MANDAL
New Delhi, 21 September

IN a last ditch attempt at saving its no-go policy that bars coal mining on ecological grounds, the environment ministry is now insisting on keeping highly dense coal-bearing forest areas absolutely free from mining activities.

The ministry's proposal to save these "inviolable" areas, if approved, would still allow it to save a sizeable chunk of forest cover. Extremely dense forest areas cover 10 per cent of India's coal bearing area of 17,300 square kilometres as against an overall 17.5 per cent area being impacted by no-go.

Environment minister Jayanthi Natarajan had proposed keeping certain areas out of bounds for mining activities during Tuesday's

NO-GO FACTS

Total coal bearing area in India (sq km)	17,300
Total geological coal reserves (BT)	277
Coal bearing area out of total forest area (%)	0.16
Power need met by coal (%)	70
Total no of coal blocks in India	602
No of blocks identified in no-go	203
Spread over in area (sq km)	3,039
Annual production potential (mt)	660
Equivalent power generation capacity (Mw)	130,000

meeting of a 12-member Group of Ministers (GoM).

Natarajan is understood to have said during the meeting that no mining should be allowed in thick forests.

Notably, in another GoM meeting last month, Natarajan had said No-Go policy has no legal basis and should not be considered for future proj-

ect approvals.

Most of the members present at the GoM endorsed Natarajan's proposal. "The environment ministry is yet to decide on the procedure it will follow to identify the inviolable areas. The proposal is still at preliminary stages," said a senior official who did not wish to be quoted.

Mines ministry to fast-track mineral concessions

The mines ministry has drawn up plans to tighten state-level governance machinery for eradicating delays in grant of mineral concessions — the reason why miners are drawn towards illegal mining practices. It includes setting up state empowered committees and district level task forces to monitor concession system, giving more powers to state mining directorates and faster environment clearances. It was finalised at a meeting of the Central Coordination-cum-Empowered Committee of the mines ministry chaired by mining secretary Vijay Kumar.

BS REPORTER

MoEF on Karnataka mining projects

Ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) on Wednesday said it would not give further clearance to mining projects in Bellary, Tumkur and Chitradurga districts in Karnataka, till the Supreme Court lifts ban on mining in those regions. The move will be a major blow to project proponents awaiting green nod from MoEF.

BS REPORTER



AUSTRALIA-INDIA ROUNDTABLE

India lobbying hard to get Oz to lift ban on uranium sale

SANDHYA SHARMA ■
NEW DELHI

With New Delhi lobbying hard to persuade Australia to remove its ban on sale of uranium to India, the recently held Australia-India Roundtable in Sydney, an initiative of the External Affairs Ministry's publicity division, agreed that the embargo was indeed an obstacle in stronger strategic relations. And New Delhi maintained that the sale of uranium would add a "new trust" to the relationship between the two countries.

Australia has time and again rejected New Delhi's request for uranium since India is non-signatory to NPT, which indeed is seen by the latter as a stumbling block for its growing energy requirement.

India has been vying for energy resources from Australia as it is making a strategic shift over a period of time from moving from fossil fuels to greater use of renewable use of natural resources which includes Nuclear energy. Coal imports also form a large part of this. Former Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran argued that there was no reason why Australia should not sell uranium to India since it has supported New Delhi's exemption at NSG.

"India is not a member of

the NPT, but India has an impeccable record as far as non-proliferation is concerned; why should that not apply to the sale of uranium?" he wondered.

"Energy security will be central to the bilateral trade and investment relationship. Recent growth in mining investment in both directions, such as major

Indian coal mining and infrastructure investments in Australia, is a positive sign," stated the Australia-India outcome statement.

New Delhi described sale of uranium to India as a "legacy issue" and emphasised that agreement to sell uranium would add new trust to relations. "There is a view in Australia that sale of uranium to India is a policy matter and this change is probably a matter of time," Rory Medcalf, Programme director-international security at the Lowy institute and a former Australian diplomat to India, told *The Pioneer*.

The Julia Gillard Government needs to see how to improve its strategic relationship with Washington and New Delhi in the wake of increased Chinese footprints. In December 2011, when the Labour Party will hold its national forum, it is expected that New Delhi will get a one-off allowance from its leaders for the sale of uranium.



**SUSPENSION ORDER
FOR 40 MINES IN GOA**

AGE CORRESPONDENT
PANAJI, SEPT. 21

The Goa Bench of the Bombay high court was told on Wednesday that the Goa Pollution Control Board had issued suspension orders to a total of 40 mines in the state as they did not have the forest and wildlife department's go ahead. Of these, 27 mines were in working condition.

Sources said that a few of these mines were run by the Congress politicians.

This becomes important as the Justice Shah Commission, which is in Goa at present to probe allegations of illegal mining in the state, has pointed out several irregularities in the state's mines. The mines and geology department would issue notices to eight working mines.

Goa CM faces flak on illegal mining

NAILED CAG report indicts
Kamat for being corrupt, partisan
and causing loss to exchequer

Ketaki Ghoge and Snehal Rebello
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PANAJI: Goa chief minister Digambar Kamat, who has held the mining portfolio in his state since 1999, finds himself swamped by a rising tide of criticism from anti-mining activists and Congress colleagues.

The Public Accounts Committee of the state legislature was asked to probe illegal mining last year following consistent demands from the Opposition and a Comptroller and Auditor General report that mentioned how the state lost revenue because of the way mining was being handled by the state administration.

"I have seen his (Kamat's) signature on every mining file, accessed through the Right to Information Act," said Claude Alvares, director of the Goa Foundation.

Kamat was with the Congress till 1994. He then switched to the BJP, and stayed with the party till 2005. He then returned to the Congress.

The chief minister said the allegations were baseless. "In my entire tenure, I have not cleared a single new mining lease. Mining leases are regulated by eight to ten agencies," said Kamat.

But it's not merely civil society. Some of Kamat's party colleagues are blaming him. "The current situation in Goa is such that probably only a handful of mines are legal. Someone in government is guilty. How can the head of the government not accept that responsibility?" asked Dayanand Narvekar, former Goa finance minister and



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DIGAMBAR KAMAT
Goa chief minister

Congress MLA.

Sources in the government said Kamat faced criticism on two counts: First, for having allegedly not offered a level playing field and having favoured certain mine owners while extending the deadline for renewing licences that had lapsed.

Kamat refuted the charge. "There is a provision in the law that allows for it. It is not illegal."

The second criticism of the chief minister is that he has allowed mining leases to be worked by contractors – persons other than original leaseholder.

Kamat said: "The person who holds the mining lease often hires someone else to help out with and monitor operations."

Mercator buys 50% in Indonesian mine

New Delhi: Mercator Lines has acquired a 50% stake in a coal mine in Indonesia's Kalimantan province for about \$30 million (₹145 crore today), a top company official said on Wednesday.

India's second largest private sector shipping company Mercator Lines also said it plans to list its coal division in London in one year.

"We have acquired 50% stake in a mine in Indonesia's east Kalimantan, which has reserves of 60 million tonnes (mt)," Mercator Lines managing director Atul Agarwal said.

The company is looking at a production of 3 mt coal in a year which it will sell, Agarwal said. **PTI**



वियतनाम के
साथ बढ़ती
नजदीकी को
समुद्री क्षेत्र में
चीन के दबदबे
पर अंकुश
लगाने का
कारगर उपाय
बता रहे हैं
हर्ष वी पंत

चीन को मुंहतोड़ जवाब

चीन के साथ भारत के संबंध नए चरण में प्रवेश कर गए हैं। नई दिल्ली ने हनोई के साथ संबंध प्रगाढ़ कर दक्षिण चीन सागर की अंतरराष्ट्रीय सीमा में तेल खोज का काम शुरू कर दिया है। पिछले दिनों वियतनाम की यात्रा के दौरान भारत के विदेश मंत्री ने चीन को झिड़क दिया। उन्होंने स्पष्ट कर दिया कि भारत की कंपनी ओएनजीसी विदेश लि. दक्षिण चीन सागर के दो वियतनामी ब्लॉकों में तेल की खोज का काम जारी रखेगी। चीन ने अन्य देशों को इस क्षेत्र से दूर रहने की चेतावनी जारी करते हुए कहा कि ब्लॉक नं. 127 और 128 में तेल की खोज के लिए बीजिंग की अनुमति जरूरी है, इसके बिना यहां कोई भी गतिविधि अवैध मानी जाएगी। इस बीच वियतनाम ने रेखांकित किया कि 1982 के संयुक्त राष्ट्र समझौते के आधार पर इन दो ब्लॉकों पर उसके संप्रभु अधिकार हैं। भारत ने वियतनाम के दावों के आधार पर आगे बढ़ने का फैसला लिया और चीन की आपत्तियों को दरकिनार कर दिया।

भारत के फैसले पर चीन ने अपनी आधिकारिक प्रतिक्रिया में इस बात पर जोर दिया कि दक्षिण चीन सागर और इसके द्वीपों पर चीन की निर्विवादित संप्रभुता है और बीजिंग वहां तेल व गैस की खोज के किसी भी प्रयास का विरोध करेगा। किंतु आधिकारिक मीडिया इस घटना पर आगबबूला है। चीन की कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी द्वारा संपादित ग्लोबल टाइम्स समाचार पत्र ने वियतनाम के साथ भारत के इस करार को 'गंभीर राजनीतिक उकसावा' कहा है। इसने आगे कहा कि चीन को इस सहयोग को रोकने की हरसंभव कोशिश करनी चाहिए। गैरक्षेत्रीय शक्तियों की दक्षिण चीन सागर में दखलंदाजी पर चिंता जताते हुए अखबार ने दावा किया कि चीन और क्षेत्रीय देशों के बीच दक्षिण चीन सागर पर विवाद तो हजम हो सकता है किंतु अन्य देशों की चुसपैठ नहीं। चीन को इसका पुरजोर विरोध करना चाहिए और इस प्रकरण में शामिल सभी पक्षों को

नुकसान का जिम्मेदार माना जाना चाहिए। यह अखबार अकसर कट्टर राष्ट्रवादी विचारों के लिए जाना जाता है और इसके संपादकीय लेख कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी की अनुमति के बाद ही प्रकाशित होते हैं।

भारत के इस दृढ़ कदम का मकसद दक्षिण चीन सागर के अंतरराष्ट्रीय जल में अपने कानूनी दावों को मजबूत करना और वियतनाम के साथ संबंध प्रगाढ़ करना है। ये दोनों कदम चीन को परेशान करते हैं जो पूर्व एशिया में भारत के बढ़ते दखल को संदेह की नजर से देखता है। जुलाई में एक चीनी युद्धपोत ने भारतीय युद्धपोत ऐरावत से वियतनाम की समुद्री सीमा में खुद की पहचान बताने और यह स्पष्ट करने के लिए कहा कि वह दक्षिण चीन सागर में क्या कर रहा है। भारतीय युद्धपोत वियतनाम के बंदरगाह से लौट रहा था और अंतरराष्ट्रीय सीमा में मौजूद था। यद्यपि भारतीय नौसेना ने तुरंत इसका खंडन किया कि चीनी युद्धपोत ने भारतीय युद्धपोत को रोककर संवाद-जवाब किए थे, किंतु इसने रिपोर्ट के तथ्यात्मक आधार को खारिज नहीं किया।

एशिया में संदेह बढ़ रहा है कि चीन अपनी नौसेना की ताकत के बूते न केवल तेल व गैस से समृद्ध दक्षिण चीन सागर पर अपना दबदबा कायम करना चाहता है, बल्कि क्षेत्रीय अर्थव्यवस्थाओं की जीवनरेखा समुद्री मार्गों पर भी अपना नियंत्रण बना रहा है। पिछले साल अमेरिका की विदेश मंत्री हिलेरी क्लिंटन

ने एशियाई दौरे पर साफ-साफ शब्दों में कहा था कि अमेरिका चीन के क्षेत्रीय आधिपत्य को स्वीकार करने का अनिच्छुक है। जब बीजिंग ने दक्षिण चीन सागर में बिखरे हुए द्वीपों पर अपना दावा ठोकते हुए इसे 'अहम हित' घोषित किया था, तब क्लिंटन ने पेशकश की थी कि वह इस क्षेत्र में चीन, ताइवान, फिलिपींस, वियतनाम, इंडोनेशिया और मलेशिया के विवादित दावों पर मध्यस्था करते हुए अंतरराष्ट्रीय तंत्र स्थापित करने में मदद कर सकता है।

हाल ही में दक्षिण चीन सागर में तेल और खनिज के दोहन के मुद्दे पर चीन की वियतनाम और फिलिपींस से तनातनी हो चुकी है। पिछले कुछ दशकों में समान हितों के नाम पर अमेरिका के संरक्षण में ही चीन एक आर्थिक महाशक्ति के रूप में उभरा है। अब चीन एक नई व्यवस्था चाहता है। ऐसी व्यवस्था जो केवल बीजिंग के लिए काम करे और साझा संसाधनों पर उसके हक पर मुहर लगाए। दक्षिण चीन सागर में अपने दखल से भारत चीन के दावों को चुनौती दे रहा है।

दक्षिण एशिया और हिंद महासागर में चीन अपनी उपस्थिति के विस्तार में जुटा है तो पूर्व एशिया में भारत भी अपना दखल बढ़ा रहा है। इस संबंध में सबसे महत्वपूर्ण है वियतनाम के साथ भारत के प्रगाढ़ होते संबंध। इस क्षेत्र में नियमित भारतीय उपस्थिति सुनिश्चित करने के लिए भारत ने वियतनाम के साथ सुरक्षा साझेदारियों में भाग

लेने का फैसला किया। दिल्ली-हनोई सुरक्षा साझेदारी के कारण भारत की वियतनाम के था तरांग बंदरगाह को इस्तेमाल करने का अधिकार मिल गया है। समुद्री मार्गों की सुरक्षा और समुद्री लुटेरों पर अंकुश लगाने के लिए दिल्ली और हनोई का बहुत कुछ दांव पर लगा है। हिंद महासागर और दक्षिण चीन सागर में चीन के बढ़ते प्रभाव को लेकर भी दोनों देश चिंतित हैं। भारतीय सामरिक हितों की मांग है कि वियतनाम एक प्रमुख क्षेत्रीय शक्ति के रूप में उभरे। इस लक्ष्य की पूर्ति के लिए भारत हनोई की पूरी सहायता कर रहा है। जिस प्रकार चीन ने भारत के पड़ोसी देशों में अपना प्रभाव बढ़ाया है, उसी प्रकार चीन की काट करने के लिए भारत को भी वियतनाम जैसे देशों में अपना प्रभाव बढ़ाकर दबाव बिंदु तैयार करने चाहिए। इसी के मद्देनजर भारत वियतनाम की सैन्य क्षमताओं को मजबूत बनाने के लिए सहायता प्रदान कर रहा है। अगर दक्षिण चीन सागर एक विवादित क्षेत्र है और चीन की संवेदनाओं को देखते हुए भारत को यहां से दूर रहना चाहिए तो चीन को भी भारत की संवेदनाओं को देखते हुए पाक अधिकृत कश्मीर में अपनी गतिविधियां बंद कर देनी चाहिए। अपने हालिया दौर में भारतीय विदेश मंत्री ने वियतनाम के साथ व्यापार, शिक्षा, वैज्ञानिक, तकनीकी और सुरक्षा क्षेत्र में सहयोग बढ़ाने के संबंध में समझौते किए हैं।

चीन की शक्ति बढ़ने से चिंतित भारत और वियतनाम का अमेरिका की ओर झुकाव बढ़ रहा है। दक्षिण चीन सागर विवाद पर प्रमुख शक्तियों में समान सोच विकसित हो रही है। उम्मीद है कि इस मुद्दे पर चीन अपने रुख में नरमी लाएगा। इस परिदृश्य में भारत का प्रवेश काफी दिनों से अपेक्षित था। अब भारत को क्षेत्रीय शक्तियों के साथ सामरिक साझेदारियां विकसित करने पर ध्यान केंद्रित करना चाहिए। इस प्रक्रिया को शुरू करने के लिए वियतनाम एक अच्छा स्थान है।

(लेखक किंग्स कॉलेज, लंदन में प्रोफेसर हैं)



स्वाव बिंदु

• जिस प्रकार भारत के पड़ोसी देशों में प्रभाव बढ़ाकर चीन भारत की घेराबंदी कर रहा है, उसी प्रकार भारत को भी वियतनाम जैसे देशों में अपना प्रभाव बढ़ाकर दबाव बिंदु तैयार करने चाहिए

‘नो गो’ पॉलिसी पर मंत्रालय नरम

नेशनल ब्यूरो | नई दिल्ली

पर्यावरण मंत्रालय कोयला खनन परियोजनाओं को लेकर अपनी ‘नो गो’ पॉलिसी पर नरम रुख अख्तियार कर सकता है। सूत्रों के मुताबिक मंत्रालय हर कोयला परियोजना पर अलग से चर्चा करने के लिए राजी हो गया है। मंत्रालय औद्योगिक विकास में अड़ंगा डालने वाले मंत्रालय के तौर पर नहीं दिखना चाहता है इसलिए माइनिंग प्रोजेक्ट में ‘गो’ और ‘नो गो’ पॉलिसी में बदलाव की तैयारी है। वित्त मंत्री प्रणब मुखर्जी की अध्यक्षता में मंत्री-समूह की बैठक में भी यह मुद्दा उठा। सूत्रों के मुताबिक मुखर्जी ने इस मामले में पर्यावरण मंत्रालय, कोयला, इस्पात व ऊर्जा मंत्रालय के बीच बने मतभेद को सुलझाने की कोशिश की। गौरतलब है कि यह मतभेद फरवरी से लगातार बना हुआ था। पर्यावरण मंत्रालय कोयला खनन के दायरे में आने वाले कुछ वन क्षेत्रों को ‘नो गो’ एरिया के तौर पर ले रहा है। इसी मुद्दे पर मंत्रालयों के बीच मतभेद बना हुआ है। सूत्रों के अनुसार मंत्री-समूह की बैठक में अपना पक्ष रखते हुए पर्यावरण मंत्रालय

ने कहा कि यदि कोयला मंत्रालय के पास कोई विशेष प्रोजेक्ट है तो मंत्रालय चर्चा करने को तैयार है। दरअसल पर्यावरण मंत्रालय नहीं चाहता कि वह विकास में बाधा बनता हुआ दिखे लेकिन पर्यावरण संरक्षण के साथ भी समझौता नहीं कर सकता। योजना आयोग के सदस्य बीके चतुर्वेदी की अगुवाई वाली कमेटी की राय है कि मंत्रालय की ‘गो’ और ‘नो गो’ पॉलिसी का वन संरक्षण कानून 1980 के तहत कोई कानूनी आधार नहीं है। मंत्री-समूह की बैठक के बाद पत्रकारों से बातचीत में कोयला मंत्री श्रीप्रकाश जायसवाल ने कहा कि चतुर्वेदी कमेटी के सभी मुद्दों को सुलझा लिया गया है। सूत्रों के अनुसार किसी भी कोयला परियोजना पर चर्चा के दौरान पर्यावरण के लिहाज से महत्वपूर्ण कई मुद्दों को ध्यान में रखा जाएगा। खासकर यदि कोयला परियोजना घने जंगल या वन्य जीव संरक्षण इलाके में है। पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने 203 कोयला ब्लॉक को ‘नो गो’ क्षेत्र में डाल रखा है। कोयला मंत्रालय के अनुसार इन कोल ब्लॉक से 66 करोड़ टन कोयले का उत्पादन प्रभावित हो रहा है।

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रेड्डी और सहयोगियों के बैंक में

200 लॉकर : सीबीआई

बेल्लारी, प्रेद : अवैध खनन के आरोप में जेल में बंद कर्नाटक के पूर्व मंत्री जी जनार्दन रेड्डी पर सीबीआई का शिकंजा कसता जा रहा है। सीबीआई के सूत्रों की मानें, तो रेड्डी और उनके सहयोगियों के यहां के एक निजी बैंक में 200 लॉकर हैं। सीबीआई सूत्रों का दावा है कि इस बैंक के 350 लॉकरों की जांच की गई, तो पता चला कि इसमें 200 लॉकर रेड्डी और उनके सहयोगियों के हैं। सूत्रों के अनुसार रेड्डी ने दस लॉकरों में सोना, प्लैटिनम और हीरे के आभूषण के अलावा महत्वपूर्ण कागजात छिपा रखे थे। हाल ही में सीबीआई के अधिकारियों ने जनार्दन रेड्डी के साले तथा ओएमसी के प्रबंध निदेशक श्रीनिवास रेड्डी के कुछ लॉकर खोले थे जिनमें से 14 किलोग्राम से अधिक सोने के जेवर जब्त किए गए।

अवैध खनन के लिए ऑनलाइन निगरानी प्रणाली

नई दिल्ली। अवैध खनन पर अंकुश लगाने के लिए सरकार दिसंबर से एक ऑनलाइन प्रणाली शुरू करेगी जिसके तहत देश में खनिज संबंधी सभी लेन-देन का पंजीकरण अनिवार्य होगा। गौरतलब है कि पिछले कुछ सालों में कई राज्यों में अवैध खनन में काफी तेजी आई है। इस साल जनवरी से मार्च के तीन महीनों के दौरान ही अवैध खनन के 24,405 मामले दर्ज किए गए।

कोयले के लिए लगाना होगा चार गुना जंगल

अंधाधुंध कोयला खनन, नई दिल्ली

'गो' और 'नो-गो' की बाधा तो खत्म हो गई है, लेकिन कोयला खनन करने वाली कंपनियों पर पर्यावरण से संबंधित कुछ कठोर शर्तें आबकारी करने की भी तैयारी है। कोयला खनन से क्षतिग्रस्त वनों के बदले तीन-चार गुना ज्यादा जंगल अब कंपनियों को लगाने होंगे। कंपनियों को अपने जंगलों की देखभाल पूरे दस वर्ष तक करनी होगी। उसके बाद राज्य सरकारों को ये जंगल सौंपे जाएंगे। मंगलवार को वित्त मंत्री प्रणव मुखर्जी की अध्यक्षता में मंत्रिसमूह (जीओएम) की बैठक में यह सहमति बनी।

सूत्रों के मुताबिक, उद्योग जगत को सिर्फ इस पर खुश नहीं हो जाना चाहिए कि कोयला खनन में गो (खनन योग्य क्षेत्र) व नो-गो (जहां खनन की मंजूरी नहीं) की बाधा दूर करने का फैसला

खनन के लिए कठोर शर्तें

हुआ है। अब सरकार उनके पर्यावरण संबंधी दायित्वों की ज्यादा कठोरता से निगरानी करेगी। कोयला खनन व विकास परियोजनाओं पर गठित बीके चतुर्वेदी समिति की नौ सिफारिशों को जीओएम ने सैद्धांतिक तौर पर मंजूरी दी है। इन सुझावों से यह सुनिश्चित होगा कि कंपनियां वन संरक्षण को नजरअंदाज नहीं कर सकें। जीओएम में इस बात की सहमति बनी है कि कंपनियां कोयला खनन शुरू करने के पांच से सातवें वर्ष में वन लगाने का काम शुरू कर देंगी। इसके बाद वे दस वर्ष तक इन वनों की देखभाल करेंगी। मौजूदा नियम के मुताबिक कंपनियां पांच वर्ष तक ही वन की देखभाल करती हैं और

फिर उन्हें राज्य सरकारों को सौंप देती हैं।

इसके अलावा भी जीओएम में वन संरक्षण के लिए कई फैसले हुए हैं। कंपनियों की तरफ से जो जंगल लगाए जाएंगे, उसकी निगरानी किसी तीसरे पक्ष से करवाई जाएगी। हर कोयला खान के संदर्भ में वन संरक्षण को लेकर उठाए गए कदमों की सालाना रिपोर्ट जारी की जाएगी।

कंपनियों की तरफ से वास्तविक तौर पर खनन शुरू होने से पहले ही जंगल लगाने की प्लानिंग को लेकर सरकार से अनुमति लेना जरूरी कर दिया गया है। अगर किसी कंपनी ने चार चरणों में कोयला निकालने का फैसला किया है, तो उसे इन सभी चरणों में वन लगाने की प्लानिंग की मंजूरी पहले चरण से पूर्व ही लेनी होगी। साथ ही कोयला खान वाले हर राज्य में वन व पर्यावरण मंत्रालय की तरफ से एक विशेष प्रकोष्ठ गठित किया जाएगा।

गैरकानूनी खनन पर लगाम लगाने की तैयारी, दिसंबर से पंजीकरण कराना जरूरी होगा

नई दिल्ली, 21 सितंबर (भाषा)। तेजी से बढ़ रहे गैरकानूनी खनन पर लगाम लगाने के लिए सरकार दिसंबर तक देश में सभी खनिज संबंधी कारोबार के अनिवार्य पंजीकरण के लिए आनलाइन प्रणाली शुरू कर देगी। पिछले दो साल में विभिन्न राज्यों में गैरकानूनी खनन में बहुत तेज बढ़ोतरी हुई है। इस साल जनवरी से मार्च के दौरान गैरकानूनी खनन के करीब 24405 मामले दर्ज हुए हैं जो पूरे 2010 के दौरान दर्ज रपट का 30 फीसद है। खान सचिव एस विजय कुमार ने कहा कि हम सभी तरह के खनिज कारोबारों के लिए इस साल के अंत तक एक लेखा प्रणाली पेश कर रहे हैं जिसमें खनन, बिक्री, परिवहन और निर्यात

जैसे मामले शामिल होंगे।

खनिज रियायत और गैरकानूनी खनन पर नियंत्रण को तेज करने के लिए हुए वरिष्ठ केंद्रीय और राज्य सरकार के अधिकारियों की बैठक की अध्यक्षता करते हुए खान सचिव ने कहा कि आनलाइन प्रणाली के तहत लौह अयस्क, चूना और बाक्साइट जैसे प्रमुख खनिजों का खनन करने वाली कंपनियों, कारोबारियों और निर्यातकों के लिए पंजीकरण कराना अनिवार्य होगा। यह पंजीकरण एक संशोधन के जरिए खनिज संरक्षण विकास नियम (एमसीडीआर) के तहत किया जाएगा। फिलहाल राज्यों में हो रहे गैरकानूनी खनन में केंद्रीय हस्तक्षेप का

पर्याप्त कानूनी प्रावधान नहीं है। लेकिन समस्या इतनी बड़ी है कि 2010 में 82330 मामले दर्ज हुए जो 2009 में दर्ज 41578 मामलों का दोगुना है।

केंद्रीय संयोजन व अधिकार प्राप्त समिति ने अपनी बैठक में आज फैसला किया गया कि सरकार इस गतिविधि पर लगाम लगाने के लिए उपग्रह चित्रण का उपयोग करेगी।

राज्यों से कहा गया है कि वह अधिकार प्राप्त समिति और जिला स्तरीय कार्यबल के जरिए और रायल्टी संग्रह प्रणाली की खामियां दूर कर खनिज प्रणाली की निगरानी में सुधार कर गैरकानूनी खनन पर लगाम लगाएं।

No unrestricted mining in dense forests, says environment & forests ministry

fe Bureau

New Delhi, Sept 21: The ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) may have agreed with the discontinuing of 'go/ no-go' classification for coal mining areas but is in no mood to allow unrestricted mining in dense forests. The ministry has now decided that some forest areas, a very small portion of the overall coal-bearing region, will be considered 'inviolate' where no mining can be permitted. These areas will be considered fragile from the environmental aspect as well as from the point of view of protection of tribal populations. These 'inviolate' areas will include national parks, tiger reserves, and wildlife sanctuaries and areas endowed with dense forest cover or rich biodiversity.

At the Group of Ministers meeting on Tuesday, the ministry has agreed to give forest clearance on a case-to-case basis for projects of national importance. This means that these areas won't be strictly 'No-go' zones. This will remove uncertainty over many projects for which the clearance process would now be duly followed.

The MoEF has also suggested that biodiversity indexing be done for these areas where species of animals, insects, herbs, shrubs and reptiles which need to be preserved besides the forest cover.

Ministry set to delist pending Karnataka mining projects

fe Bureau

New Delhi, Sept 21: In yet another setback to mining operations in Karnataka, the ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) on Wednesday decided to delist all the mining projects in the state which are pending for environment clearance and are at different stages of processing.

The diktat came after the Supreme Court banned iron ore mining in Bellary, Tumkur and Chitradurga districts of Karnataka last month after it found rampant illegal mining happening in the state.

"It has been decided that all the mining projects which are pending for environment clearance and are at different stages of processing/consideration, both in the ministry and the state environment impact assessment authority will be delisted," the MoEF said in an order.

The order further added: "Those projects which have not yet been placed before the Expert Appraisal Committee/State Expert Appraisal Committee, will be returned."

Moreover, the ministry has also decided that it will not consider any mining proposal from these three districts till



Jayanthi Natarajan,
environment minister

THE MINISTRY HAS DECIDED IT WILL NOT CONSIDER ANY MINING PROPOSAL FROM BELLARY, TUMKUR AND CHITRADURGA DISTRICTS TILL THE BAN IS LIFTED

the ban is lifted. There are 11 mining projects awaiting environment clearance in the state.

At present, the CBI is probing the alleged illegal mining and irregularities in allotment of mining leases to Obulapuram Mining Company (OMC) and has arrested mining baron Janardhana Reddy and OMC Managing Director Srinivas Reddy.

"Accordingly, the prospective project proponents are advised not to submit any mining proposal for environment clearance till such time the ban is lifted," the order said.

Panel meets on mining

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Central coordination-cum-empowered committee on Tuesday took several decisions on mining and reviewed the position of mineral concession regime in the country.

The meeting decided to prepare an action plan to increase the capacity of State Mining Directorates, start end-to-end accounting system for mineral transactions to prevent and detect illegal mining through an *All India online system* and ensure proper exploration in leasehold areas in a time-bound manner.

An official release said the

committee took decisions to bring efficiency and transparency in the system.

Issues discussed are action taken to curb illegal mining, including use of satellite imagery, improving monitoring of the mineral system through a State-empowered committee and district level task forces, plugging loopholes in the royalty collection system, strengthening governance by gearing up the State Mining Directorates and expediting approval including forest clearance cases to clear long-pending mineral concession applications.

Brahmani Steels a fake firm: CBI

Land allotted for factory and airport mortgaged with banks to raise funds, says probe agency

HYDERABAD: The CBI investigations have unravelled the mystery behind the numerous benami companies in India and abroad floated by Janardhana Reddy as conduits to fund Brahmani Steels with a whopping project cost of Rs 20,000 crore.

Seeking his custody for nine more days, the CBI said Reddy's associates had sold iron ore for a pittance to their overseas benami companies which resold it for higher stakes and the extra revenue was routed back as investment in Brahmani Steels.

"We need to know how much ore was mined and sold to whom? Who are the officials who supported them in giving transport permits, etc?," the CBI counsel and deputy legal adviser B Ravindranath and public prosecutor TV Ramana said.

Describing the Obulapuram Mining Company (OMC) scam as the biggest scandal in the abuse of natural resources, the CBI counsels told the court that several senior Andhra Pradesh



A file photo of then Andhra Pradesh chief minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy and others at the foundation-laying ceremony of Brahmani Steels.

officials had supported the illegal activities of the mining baron in transportation, false accounting and mining.

It appears that former additional director general of the mining department, R Linga Reddy, and four other officials had openly colluded with the lease of the Antargangamma Konda mines.

"Officials gave permits for the mines and the ore was ex-

cavated elsewhere and shown as that extracted from this mine," the counsels said.

As many as eight of his supporters who had colluded with him in the illegal activities had vanished into thin air now. CBI now plans to question Reddy's wife Lakshmi Aruna about her lockers and involvement with benami companies.

Meanwhile, the CBI says it has proof that the entire Brah-

The phantom steel plant

Former minister and mining baron Janardhana Reddy had also tried to start a mega steel plant in his home district Bellary. The Brahmani Steel integrated steel plant in Sandur and Hospet in Bellary literally stole the thunder at Global Investors Meet held in Bangalore during June 2010, as it was the highest investment proposal for a single project. The proposed mega steel plant with a capacity of six million tonnes per annum, at a cost of Rs 36,000 crore, bigger than those by established firms like ArcelorMittal and Posco of Korea. Lakshmi Aruna, Managing Director of the company, had signed the memorandum of understanding on behalf of the company.

Reddy had then claimed that work on the Bellary plant would begin in three months.

Interestingly, the State government had not disclosed Reddy's investment plans despite the State High Level Clearance Committee clearing the project in May that year. However, the steel plant failed to take off.

mani Steels was a fictitious steel plant aided by former Andhra Pradesh chief minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy (YSR). "The plant never took shape, but both Reddy and YSR had colluded in granting the mines, land for factory and airport, which were mortgaged with banks to raise funds for mining

activity and permission was granted to export iron ore violating all forest regulations.

Reddy was allotted 10,760 acres of government land by the YSR government in 2007 for setting up a Rs 20,000-crore captive steel plant. Named Brahmani Steels, the plant at Jammalamadugu in

Andhra Pradesh's Kadapa district was inaugurated with much fanfare with YSR arriving in a chopper.

Also in attendance were the chief minister's son Jaganmohan Reddy and several of his cabinet colleagues. The largesse by the YSR government did not end there. It gave another 4,000 acres of land to Reddy for developing an airport with the promise of generating 10,000 direct jobs and one lakh indirect jobs via the two projects.

"We will also make a big airport here. Like Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore, aircraft will land right here," Reddy had proclaimed that day.

Four years on, there's no sign yet of the steel plant. Reddy, however, managed to raise Rs 350 crore by using the land that he had procured for just Rs 18 crore from the YSR government.

He also reportedly exported 54 lakh tonnes of iron ore that was meant to be used by the steel plant.

The State government has now distanced itself from the

matter, terming it a decision by YSR. "The decision on allotment of iron ore, that is captive mining, to OMC, Anantapur Mining Company and four other companies was taken by YSR, not the Cabinet. For the concessions to Brahmani Industries, the Cabinet is collectively responsible," state minister D L Ravindra Reddy has said.

The Opposition, meanwhile, attacked the government for helping the mining magnate manipulate the process. "While finalising the contract, they eliminated competition in the name of Brahmani captive unit. Later, they issued a government order to sell iron ore anywhere as they like," former chief minister and Telugu Desam Party president N Chandrababu Naidu said.

Jagan, who broke away from the Congress last year to form his own party after YSR's death, is already under the scanner for his links with the Reddys - more precisely for getting a stake in Brahmani Steels in return for his father's favours.

DH News Service

तारानगर-भानीपुरा अवैध परिवहन के लिए बन गया अनुकूल रूट

जिप्सम माफिया की पौ बारह

■ हरियाणा में बेच
काट रहे हैं चांदी
■ अब तक 604 टन
जब्त

चुरू

sikar@patrika.com
खनन माफिया के लिए चुरू जिले
का भानीपुरा व तारानगर क्षेत्र



जिप्सम की
तस्करी का
प्रमुख अड्डा
बन गया है।
यहां से
जिप्सम को
अवैध रूप से
सी मा व ती

हरियाणा ले जाकर ऊंचे दामों पर
बेचा जा रहा है। पुलिस की ओर से
तस्करी के नेटवर्क में सेंध लगाने
के प्रयास शुरू किए जाने के बाद
से इलाके में खनन माफिया के होश
उड़े हुए हैं। सूचना के अधिकार के
तहत मांगी गई जानकारी में इसका
खुलासा हुआ।

604 टन जिप्सम जब्त

पुलिस ने सरदारशहर के भानीपुरा
व तारानगर मार्ग पर करीब आठ
माह की अवधि में 604 टन
जिप्सम जब्त किया है। जानकारी
के अनुसार पुलिस ने 9 मार्च
2010 में तारानगर थाना क्षेत्र में
एक ही दिन में 29 टन जिप्सम
पकड़ने की कार्रवाई की थी। यह
कार्रवाई रुक-रुक कर नौ नवम्बर

2010 तक जारी रही।

28 मामलों में चालान

पुलिस ने पिछले एक साल में 28
मामले पकड़कर आरोपियों के
खिलाफ चालान पेश किया है।
तारानगर क्षेत्र में वर्ष 2010 में
सर्वाधिक 20 मामले दर्ज कर 374
और भानीपुरा मार्ग पर 230 टन
जिप्सम के अवैध परिवहन के
मामले दर्ज किए गए। सभी मामलों
में आरोपियों के खिलाफ चालान
पेश किए जा चुके हैं।

क्या है जिप्सम

जिप्सम जमीन के लिए उपयोगी
खनिज है। इसका उपयोग फसलों में
पोषक तत्व के रूप में किया जाता है।
इसके अलावा भूमि की क्षारीयता को

कम करने, प्लास्टर ऑफ पेरिस व
सीमेंट बनाने के काम में भी इसका
उपयोग खूब किया जाता है।
सरदारशहर तहसील के भानीपुरा,
तारानगर व राजगढ़ के कुछ क्षेत्रों
और हनुमानगढ़, रावतसर इलाके की
भूमि में जिप्सम निकलता है।

(कासं.)

इनका कहना है

जिले में खनन नहीं होकर अन्य
स्थानों से अवैध खनन कर जिप्सम
पड़ोसी राज्य की तरफ ले जाया जा
रहा है। पुलिस ने अब तक के सभी
मामलों में न्यायालय में चालान पेश
कर दिए हैं।

एसएन खींची
पुलिस अधीक्षक, चुरू

DNA investigations | Final in a five-part series

Every 24 hours a coal miner dies in India, but who cares

DNA Investigations Bureau • MUMBAI

Gangabala lost her husband in a coal-mining accident in the Central Sonda colliery, Jharkhand, five years ago.

The 45-year-old woman from Ramgarh district is still to recover from the shock. But Gangabala is not alone. Ever since the government of India nationalised coal industries in 1974, miners have been dying.

More than 370 miners were killed in 1975 when a routine explosion led to the roof giving away inside the Chasnala colliery near Dhanbad, Jharkhand. The deaths were soon forgotten, but the incident set the cash registers ringing at the box office when Bollywood came up with the Amitabh Bachchan-starrer *Kaala Patthar* based on the disaster. DNA correspondents found, however, that even today, on average, one family loses its breadwinner every 24 hours.

The main reason for such deaths is companies not using safety funds. Coal India Limited (CIL) and its eight subsidiaries, Neyveli Lignite Corporation, Singareni Collieries Corporation Limit-



Mukti Devi's husband died in a coal mine

ed, captive block miners, and village-level miners (who have traditionally been involved in mining and are now considered illegal miners) mine coal in the country. Almost 30% of the funds allotted by CIL for safety (which add up to Rs693 crore over the past three years) has remained unused, the standing committee on safety in coal mines said in its report. DNA has a copy of the report.

Officials from the directorate general for mines safety (DGMS) rarely carry out safety inspections, GK Srivastava, a member of the CIL safety board, said.

● Turn to p12

Every 24 hours a coal miner dies in India, but who cares

From p1

Also, responsibilities are not clearly defined and miners are not properly trained, compounding the problem of lack of safety, Srivastava said.

DNA could not get any comment from Satish Puri, DGMS commissioner, on the matter though correspondents visited his office, sent e-mails and called him several times on telephone.

DNA has a copy of the Union labour ministry's report on deaths since 1980. The list suggests that 160 miners die every year on average. These "statistical deaths" happen in coal-mining accidents. Then there are "non-statistical deaths" (never recorded officially). At least 60 miners die inside the mines annually, but their names will not be found on any of the official lists.

"Seven to 10 people die in every subsidiary every year because of heart attacks or strokes," SQ Jama, MLC in Maharashtra and a prominent coal industry union leader, said.

A senior official of Central Coalfields Ltd (CCL) confirmed this. "Such deaths do happen because hospitals at collieries do not conduct proper pre-medical examination (PME) of workers," he said.

DNA has documents to prove that some miners of WCL are unfit to work underground, but doctors have

Trend in Accidents, Resultant Casualties in Coal Mines ('81 to '10)

Year	Fatal Accidents			Serious Accidents	
	No. of Accidents	Number of Persons		No. of Accidents	No. of Persons Seriously Injured
		Killed	Seriously Injured		
1981	165	184	47	1151	1166
1985	176	204	31	1007	1029
1990	151	166	23	893	960
1995	137	219	23	757	790
2000	117	144	28	661	679
2005	96	117	19	1106	1119
2010*	72	88	45	334	339

Note: * : Data for 2010 is provisional and is upto 30.09.2010.

Source : Ministry of Labour & Employment

failed to recognise this. Also, DNA has anecdotal evidence which suggests that contractors engaged by CIL and other mining companies do not report deaths that cannot be attributed to accidents.

When DNA correspondents visited the Umrer mine near Nagpur, an official said two contract workers died on duty in August 2009. But the contractor manipulated the information to say they died in a road accident. Such cases abound in every subsidiary of CIL.

And what about the "illegal miners", the villagers? There is no data on the casualties. Experts say the number of deaths might run into several hundreds. A senior police officer in Ranchi said a conservative es-

timate would be nothing less than 150 deaths annually in Jharkhand alone. DNA visited Golakd, Kujama, Surunga basti, and Logpeet villages in Dhanbad district, Jharkhand, to find that several illegal miners from these villages had died. Surendar Paswan, a social activist from Dhanbad, said five to six people from each village perish every year.

The apathy of the coal companies as well as the government has left hundreds of families in the lurch as they have lost their breadwinners in mining accidents. It is no wonder that Gangabala is now engaged in the same dangerous occupation that claimed her husband's life.

dnainvestigation@gmail.com

Centre dumps 'go, no-go', dubs it illegal

Mining sector gets a boost. Question is, who takes the blame for losses incurred by industries following Jairam Ramesh's crusade?

Neeraj Thakur • NEW DELHI

Less than two years after splitting coal mining zones into 'go and no-go' — a move that has stalled almost every big-ticket coal mining project in India — the government is scrapping the policy.

The Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), which had framed the policy guidelines along with the Ministry of Coal, on Tuesday accepted that the categorisation of 'go and no-go' did not have any legal sanctity.

The move was expected after Jayanti Natarajan was given charge of the MoEF, replacing Jairam Ramesh, whose brainchild the policy was.

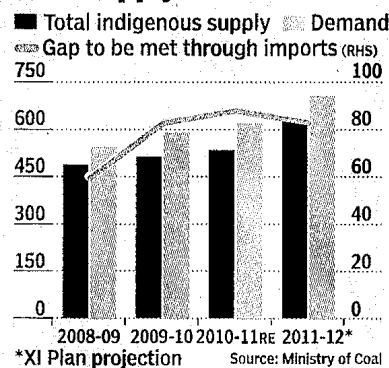
"Had this happened in any other country, the government would have been sued left, right and centre for loss in business and opportunity cost, now that

there is a mea culpa," said an analyst who tracks the resources sector with a foreign brokerage. "India has unnecessarily lost two years of crucial productivity gains and also fixed capital formation opportunities."

In a meeting of group of ministers', Natarajan acceded to the recommendations of the B K Chaturvedi Committee, which said forest clearances should be based on the Forest Clearance Act instead of a go and no-go policy. The panel had argued that the go, no-go policy had no legal sanctity and projects cannot be cleared or barred based on its guidelines.

According to a source present at the meeting, Natarajan said she was ready to take up projects on a case-to-case basis, and in future no project would be judged on the basis of the policy guidelines drawn by Jairam Ramesh.

Coal supply & demand



"Give me everything in writing," finance minister Pranab Mukherjee told Natarajan towards the end of the meeting, one person said.

The group of ministers was formed in February this year, after the ministries of power, coal and steel came together to protest against the 'no-go' policy.

After the classification, around 203 coal blocks with reserves of over 600 million tonne in nine major coalfields had been barred from any mining activity. These included many mines belonging to Coal India Ltd. Corporate majors Essar and Hindalco were barred from mining in the Mahan block for their projects, while KSK Energy could not mine in the Morga II block in the Hasdeo Arand coal-field in Chhattisgarh. Both these blocks are located in densely forested areas and are also among the eight blocks suggested for forest clearance by the committee set up by the Prime Minister's Office, headed by T K A Nair, principal secretary to the Prime Minister.

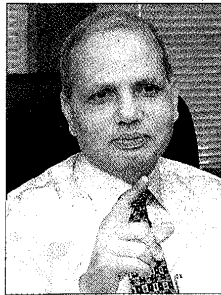
According to Planning Commission data, the power sector alone was losing potential production of 143,000 mw of power due to the MoEF policy.

The group of ministers also constituted a committee under Planning Commission member Chaturvedi to resolve the issue of NTPC's North Karanpura power plant, which falls in a coal bearing area in Jharkhand.

While the coal ministry has been arguing in favour of relocating the proposed 1980 mw plant, the power ministry has been opposing the move, following which the matter was referred to the ministerial panel earlier this year.

Monsoon sinks Coal India output hopes

Hind Copper alters float plan



Shakeel Ahmed in Calcutta on Tuesday. Picture by Kishor Roy Chowdhury

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Calcutta, Sept. 20: Hindustan Copper Ltd has put the sale of fresh equity on the back-burner, fearing that the new shares may hurt the price of the scrip on the stock exchanges.

The cabinet had approved the sale of 10 per cent of the government's stake in the company and the issue of 10 per cent fresh equity through an FPO (follow-on public offer) more than a year ago, but the issue did not hit the market.

The company has now informed the ministry of mines that it does not need to generate cash by way of a stake sale at present.

Hind Copper chairman and managing director Shakeel Ahmed said he did not expect the company to raise any money before two years.

"There is a projected shortfall of about Rs 200 crore in our Rs 3,677-crore expansion plan keeping the London Metal Exchange copper price projection in mind. But even if we need to raise this money, the first preference will be external commercial borrowing (ECB)," he said.

The ECB route will be preferable as the company earns in dollar, which provides a natural hedge against currency fluctuation.

The change in the FPO plan followed market feedback that stock prices may be severely hit if the liquidity of the stock goes up substantially all of a sudden.

The Centre holds 99.59 per cent in the country's largest copper producer.

In the past, the NMDC stock had taken a beating after a large number of shares hit the market.

Ahmed said the company hoped to do much better in the second half of this financial year as it was sitting on a pile of inventory.

Hind Copper also expects the cabinet to give its final approval for the company's biggest mine expansion project at Malankhand within a week.

Nissan Copper fixes date for share consolidation

Nissan Copper has fixed October 3 as the record date for the purpose of ascertaining the eligibility of the shareholders for consolidation of 10 equity shares having face value of ₹1 each into one equity share having face value of ₹10 each.

Uranium Corp, NPCIL to Bid for Assets Abroad

RAKHI MAZUMDAR
KOLKATA

Public sector units Uranium Corporation of India Ltd (UCIL) and Nuclear Power Corp of India Ltd (NPCIL) will jointly bid for overseas uranium reserves, potentially boosting its financial firepower in any bid battle for gaining control of these assets.

The two companies are exploring initial bids for mines in Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Russia and South Africa. India, which needs more power to light homes and run factories, is focusing on cleaner sources of energy. Its nuclear plants produce about 3% of the total power generated in the country, which India aims to raise to 25% by 2050.

"UCIL and NPCIL will jointly bid for assets. We are keen on securing uranium assets abroad, even as we develop new mines within the country," UCIL managing director Diwakar Acharya said, adding, "We would like to bring back the ore to the country," referring to assets in those countries.

While NPCIL will be the majority partner in any such project, UCIL is likely to pick up strategic stake of about 26%.

UCIL has expertise in hard-rock mining while NPCIL operates atomic power stations. The two companies joining hands will enhance the financial muscle of any bid.

The Department of Atomic Energy, the administrative agency for both compa-

nies, is framing a policy to facilitate the venture. In the past, policy issues and slow decision-making have stymied efforts by some PSUs to acquire assets abroad.

"As a mining company, we can contribute our expertise in hard-rock mining. We have some of the best mining experts and technologists working for us," Acharya said.

Acharya said factors such as mineable reserves, logistics and the regulatory framework of the host country would also influence choice.

"Globally, uranium prices crashed after the accident at the Fukushima reactor in Japan. A good reserve could be valued anywhere between \$300 million and \$500 million," an analyst said.

विदेशी यूरैनियम के लिए UCIL, NPCIL मिलकर लगाएंगी बोली

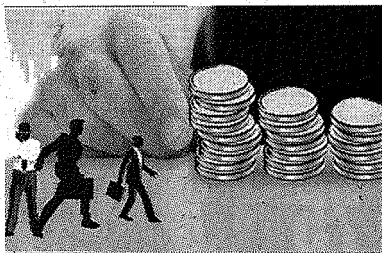
राखी मजूमदार

कोलकाता

सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की कंपनियां यूरैनियम कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया और न्यूक्लियर पावर कॉरपोरेशन विदेश में यूरैनियम के भंडार हासिल करने के लिए संयुक्त रूप से बोली लगाएंगी। भारत ने अपने महत्वाकांक्षी परमाणु ऊर्जा कार्यक्रम को पटरी पर बनाए रखने के प्रयास तेज कर दिए हैं और नई रणनीति इसी मकसद से बनाई गई है।

दोनों कंपनियां मंगोलिया, कजाकिस्तान, रूस और दक्षिण अफ्रीका में खानों के लिए शुरुआती बोली लगाने की संभावनाएं तलाश रही हैं। भारत को घरेलू जरूरतों और फैक्ट्रियों को संचालित करने के लिए और ज्यादा ऊर्जा की जरूरत है और वह ऊर्जा के स्वच्छ स्रोत पर अपना ध्यान केंद्रित कर रहा है। फिलहाल, देश के कुल ऊर्जा उत्पादन में न्यूक्लियर प्लांट द्वारा पैदा की जाने वाली ऊर्जा की हिस्सेदारी करीब 3 फीसदी है। साल 2050 तक भारत इसे बढ़ाकर 25 फीसदी के स्तर पर लाना चाहता है।

यूरैनियम कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया लिमिटेड (यूसीआईएल) के मैनेजिंग डायरेक्टर दिवाकर आचार्य ने बताया, 'हम विदेश में यूरैनियम संपदा हासिल करने के इच्छुक हैं। इसके अलावा, हम देश में भी नई खदानें विकसित करेंगे।' उन्होंने बताया कि रिपेक्टों में इस्तेमाल की खातिर हम



अयस्क को देश में लाने की कोशिश करेंगे। ऐसे किसी भी प्रोजेक्ट में न्यूक्लियर पावर कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (एनपीसीआईएल) बड़ी साझेदार होगी, जबकि यूसीआईएल ऐसे प्रोजेक्ट में 26 फीसदी के करीब हिस्सेदारी लेगी।

इन दोनों कंपनियों की प्रशासनिक एजेंसी डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ एटॉमिक एनर्जी (डीएई) इस वेंचर को साकार करने के लिए नीतियां तैयार कर रहा है। पिछले सालों के दौरान नीतिगत मुद्दों और निर्णय लेने में देरी के कारण कुछ पीएसयू कंपनियों के विदेश में संपदा हासिल करने की कोशिशों को झटका लगा है। आचार्य ने कहा, 'बतौर एक माइनिंग कंपनी हम हार्ड रॉक माइनिंग में अपनी विशेषज्ञता के स्तर पर सहयोग कर सकते हैं। हमारे पास कुछ बेहतरीन माइनिंग विशेषज्ञ और तकनीकी जानकार हैं।' उन्होंने कहा कि निवेश का आकार भंडार की गुणवत्ता और उसकी प्रकृति पर निर्भर करेगा।

Tepid Trading Caps Base Metal Turnover

Global economic uncertainties result in narrow-range trading in April-August period

RAM SAHGAL
MUMBAI

Low punter interest in the base metals counter has pulled down the turnover of this class of commodities in the financial year through August. Copper, nickel, zinc, aluminium and lead futures on MCX have posted an over 3% fall in turnover during the April-August 2011 period to Rs 10.4 lakh crore from a year ago as most of these commodities have traded in a narrow range over the five months, said brokers.

While some brokers like Geojit Comtrade have advised clients to take limited exposure to base metals till they break out or break down from a narrow range, others like Admisi Commodities felt it was better to wait on the sidelines for positive or negative global economic news, to result in a shakeout.

"Base metals led by copper have traded in a narrow 6-8% range over the past six months, limiting chances of traders making money by rolling over their positions," said Viral Shah, senior VP, Geojit Comtrade. "We have recommended clients may trade in the counter in a limited way."

Suresh Nair, director, Admisi Commodities, agreed. "Base metals haven't moved as much as bullion or crude oil, which attracted trader in-

Metal Mania No More

- Some brokers advise clients to take limited exposure to base metals till they break out of a narrow range
- Others say it's better to wait for positive or negative global economic news to result in a shakeout
- Traders like volatility as it enables them to make money by frequently entering and exiting counters
- Low volatility, as witnessed in base metals in recent months, deters traders from actively taking positions

BASE METAL PRICES ON MCX PER KILO

	APRIL 1	SEPT 20	% CHANGE
Copper	430.35	406.60	-6.7
Nickel	1161.90	1023.20	-11.9
Zinc	107.70	100.95	-6.2

Base metals haven't moved as much as bullion or crude oil due to fears of a double-dip recession.

SURESH NAIR
Director, Admisi Commodities

terest because of the arb (arbitrage) between Brent and Nymex crude. Fears of the world economy slipping into a double-dip recession have been fuelled by weak employment num-

bers in the US and sovereign debt issues in the 17-member Eurozone. These and China's checks to curb inflation in its realty sector have impacted base metals demand."

Both analysts said base metals could move out of the narrow trading range over the next few weeks once clarity emerges on what steps these two regions take to put economic growth back on track and reduce high unemployment. "It remains to be seen if Obama can push the proposed spending cuts through the Congress by taxing the rich and creating jobs by building roads, ports and other infrastructure.... if these proposed laws are passed by the US Congress, they could boost the prospects of base metals.... if on the other hand they remain only on paper and the fiscal situation in Europe worsens, base metals will fall. Either way, it would provide a clearer picture to those trading base metals," said Nair.

Base metals like copper, zinc and aluminium are traded on local commodity bourse MCX, which has more than 80% market share in commodities trading among five national commexes. Traders like volatility as it enables them to make money by frequently entering and exiting counters.

Low volatility, as witnessed in base metals in recent months, deters traders from actively taking positions. "I think fundamental factors are stacked against base metals and have advised clients to sell on rallies," said Gnanasekar Thiagarajan, director, Commtrendz.

No Mining Nod in Bellary, Tumkur & Chitradurga Till SC Lifts Ban

OUR POLITICAL BUREAU
NEW DELHI

The environment ministry has decided that it will not consider for clearance any of the pending proposals for mining projects in the Bellary, Tumkur and Chitradurga districts in Karnataka. It will not take up any mining proposal till the Supreme Court lifts the ban in these three districts.

In an order issued on Tuesday, the ministry said that in keeping with the Supreme Court orders of July 29 and August 26, all mining projects which are "pending for environmental clearance and are at different stages of consideration/processing" with the ministry or with the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority will be "delisted". In August, the Supreme Court extended a ban on iron ore mining in the Bellary district to



NO CLEARANCE: Jayanthi Natrajan

FILE PHOTO

the districts of Tumkur and Chitradurga after the Central Empowered Committee submitted its report containing prima facie evidence of environmental degradation in these areas. The ban on mining in the Bellary district, the hub of illegal iron mining in the state, had been imposed on July 29.

The ministry had in October imposed a moratorium on fresh mining proposals after reports on rampant illegal mining in the area. At that time, the ministry said that the moratorium was being imposed with the objective of controlling illegalities in mining areas. However, with the state failing to take specific and timebound measures to check illegal mining, the moratorium continued to be in place. However during this time, projects proposals already under consideration were being taken up for clearances.

DECISION ON NMDC'S LEGACY BID TODAY

STATE-OWNED NMDC, which has put in a bid to acquire 50 per cent holding in Australian exploration firm Legacy Iron Ore, is expecting to get a favourable decision by Wednesday.

"We are expecting an announcement by the Legacy board, recommending our offer to shareholders, on Wednesday," an NMDC official said. Earlier, the Australian Securities Exchange ASX halted trading of Legacy's shares till Wednesday, following a request from the company.